

Evidence for God From Morality

The Axiological Argument



A Simple Proof

There are several compelling arguments for the existence of God, and we often tend to focus on those arguments that are rooted in the sciences, and that is a perfectly honest and appropriate way to examine the evidence. In fact, there is more than enough evidence in science to prove the point, particularly as we examine the Cosmological and Teleological Arguments, also posted on this site. But there is actually another argument that is equally as powerful and much easier to examine. Is it possible that the very presence of morality in our world proves the existence of God? If this is true, then we may have been overlooking one of the simplest and most direct proofs that God exists!



An Easy Argument

This simple proof is actually much easier to examine and describe for people as they begin to examine the reality of God. Unlike scientific proofs, an examination of morality is something that all of us can relate to without having to crack open a physics book. All of us have thought about and lived in a world that is filled with moral choices. We all understand the presence of morality, and if we simply examine its origins, we may prove the existence of God! We need to begin by first taking a position related to moral relativity. We've first got to ask the question, "is there such a thing as 'right' or 'wrong', or is this notion simply a relative question that varies from individual to individual. I hope this discussion helps you to take a stand on that question, but there is also more information on a web page we designed specifically to address the secular lie that all morality is relative. You can check it out [HERE](#).



The Axiological Argument

Now we're going to examine this issue of moral absolutes by taking a hard look at an argument for the existence of God known as the "Axiological" Argument. "Axio" means the "study of values" and the Axiological Argument uses the presence of values or 'mores' to prove the existence of God. It's a simple argument:

- (1) *There is an Objective (Absolute) Moral Law*
- (2) *Every Law Has a Law Giver*
- (3) *Therefore, There is an Objective (Absolute) Law Giver*
- (4) *The Objective (Absolute) Law Giver is God*

Like other arguments, if the foundation of the argument is true, the conclusion of the argument is also true. In this case, if there is an absolute Moral Law, then there has to be an Absolute Moral Law Giver. If we can prove there are moral absolutes, the argument is over.



Describer of Prescriber?

Now, there are two ways to look at the behavior that we see in the world and judge ethical or moral value. We can simply look at the behavior of each culture and DESCRIBE what we see. We don't try to discern if the behavior is "good" or "bad", we simply look at it and describe it. We talk about "what is" and "what is not". Men can easily do this and it is clear that if there is no judgment that can be made about whether

something is good or bad, then all this behavior can be attributed to MAN alone. If we live in a world where no behavior can be judged, then anything that men say is appropriate would certainly be appropriate. After all, man is the final judge in a world where behavior is simply described.

But if moral behavior is more than what is described by each culture, if there is an over riding morality that supersedes the desires of each culture, then we will have to admit that behavior is not only described, it is PRESCRIBED! Prescribed behavior calls us beyond “what is” and “what is not” and directs us toward “what ought to be” and “what ought not to be”. And while men can certainly describe “what is”, it will take an absolute being to prescribe what absolutely “ought to be”! And that is the kind of world that we live in. It is a world that DOES have moral absolutes, and world that DOES have moral PRESCRIPTIONS, and if that is the case, then we are going to have to recognize that these prescriptions require a prescriber, and that prescriber is God Himself.



The Practical Reality of Moral Relativism

Now not everyone will agree that we do live in a world of absolute moral prescriptions. As a matter of fact, it has become quite popular to deny moral absolutes altogether. But when people do this, they are taking a philosophical position that they cannot practically live out in their real lives. Let me give you an example. There is an old story of a college professor who assigned a term paper in his sociology class. One of his students decided to write a detailed paper supporting moral relativism and he proceeded to complete a very elaborate paper on the topic. He provided excellent examples, and the paper was very well researched and resourced. His argument was well articulated and his grammar was exceptional. The student turned in the paper and a week later the professor returned the report with a grade. The student was shocked to see that he had received an “F”!

The student felt he had no choice but to confront the professor over the issue. He demanded an explanation for the grade, considering the fact that his paper was so well researched and written and had fulfilled all the requirements of the assignment. The professor told him flatly that he had given the student an “F” because he did not agree with the student’s position that all morality is relative. The student was incensed! He told the professor that his grading approach was unfair, in that he graded the paper based not on its merits but on his own personal opinion! That approach, according to the student, was simply unfair!

The professor replied by telling the student that in this particular class, run by this particular professor, he could apply whatever grading philosophy that he wished, and he decided that in this class, “A” papers are only those papers that agree with his own personal positions! The student went wild; arguing that it was unfair to take this approach, so the professor asked the logical question that was truly guiding the student’s life (regardless of what he may have argued in the paper): “Are you saying that there is a principle of fairness that supersedes and overrides my personal opinion on this matter? Are you saying that there is a universal principle of fairness here that I should submit to? Because if I have to submit to universal rules of fairness in grading your report, then you’ve just disproved the entire thesis of your paper.”

Those who argue that there are no absolute values, hold themselves an absolute value! They

value absolutely that there are no absolute values! In other words, when you argue that there is no absolute truth, you are taking a position of absolute truth (the absolute truth that there is no absolute truth!) It is a self defeating position that collapses under its own weight. If there are no moral absolutes, our world struggles to exist without a footing and structure. We lose the ability to make any significant decision:

Without Moral Absolutes:

Nothing can be considered FAIR

Nothing can be considered JUST

Nothing can be considered RIGHT

Now most of us have watched one of the numerous courtroom television shows, like "People's Court" or "Texas Justice". We love to see how judges come down on one side of an issue or another, but we assume from the very beginning that these judges are relying on more than their own opinion to make decisions! We assume that they are relying on the law, and the law supersedes their own opinion. It always amazes me that even those who would say that they believe in moral relativism seem to enjoy the structured and safe life that comes with living in a world that is governed by legal absolutes! I would love to see how they would feel about moral relativism if they were living in a world where every person they came in contact with was a law unto themselves. It would certainly be a dangerous and crazy world to live in!



You Can't Kill Whoever You Want

If you really think about it, there are several moral absolutes and universal values that govern the behavior of all humanity, regardless of culture and regardless of history. One of these moral absolutes has been the ethical principle that it is NEVER right for us to kill whoever we want for absolutely no reason. Now each culture may argue about the nature of justifiable homicide, but every culture has struggled to make the decision about when it is appropriate to kill because every culture has quietly accepted the universal reality that you cannot kill for no reason. This is a simply absolute value that everyone has to recognize, even as they try to negotiate the way in which this absolute is applied to their individual situation.



You Can't Torture Little Children for Fun

Every culture will also agree on the universal and absolute moral position that it is wrong to torture innocent children. Few of us will argue against this principle and if we did discover a society on planet earth in which this behavior was encouraged, we would violently object it! We would use whatever international organizations we could to stop the government of that nation from continuing to exist, as long as it was encouraging this outrageous and morally repulsive behavior!



You Can't Take Another Man's Wife

At a much less extreme level, it is also clear that there are moral absolutes related to the simplest of social relationships. Every culture recognizes the universal moral truth that you cannot just take the spouse of another person for your self. It's simply not "right" and everyone knows it. Now each culture may argue about how many wives or husbands a person can have, but all cultures agree that it is not right to take a spouse who belongs to someone else. It is a simple moral absolute.

In essence, there are a number of universal moral absolutes that apply to every culture, regardless of where that culture may be located on the globe or in the span of history. If you don't accept this truth, then you will have to accept the fact that you can never call the actions of abusive nations to account. If there is no absolute morality, then you can never judge the behavior of evil societies. You will never be able to judge or stop genocide as it may occur across the globe. If we can't agree that there is a right or wrong way to treat people, then we can never stop those who mistreat people.



It's Been Tried Before

We faced a dilemma of this type following World War II, when we captured German soldiers and doctors who committed atrocities in the Jewish prison camps. These men were brought to trial at Nuremberg following the war, and the issue of moral relativity was directly tested. The lawyers for the German Officers argued that these men should not be judged for things that were morally acceptable in the nation of Germany at the time of the war. They argued that their supervisors and culture encouraged their behavior! In fact, they argued that to do anything other than what they did would be to defy the culture and ideology in which they lived. In their morally relative world, it was perfectly OK for them to conduct the torture and experiments that they conducted. How could they now be judged by those who held opposing moralities?

The world court didn't accept this argument for a second. The court decided that there was a higher morality that should have been known and understood by these officers. Even if they didn't understand this higher standard, the court believed that these men would still have to be held accountable to this standard and all the officers were convicted of war crimes. The courts, in essence, upheld the reality that there is an absolute morality.



Does God Define Moral Absolutes?

If there are absolute moral values, then I think it is fair to ask where these absolutes came from. As Christians we think the answer is obvious, in fact, we think that the presence of moral absolutes is an evidence for the faith we rationally accept. Human laws are good and necessary, but universal supernatural moral absolutes are undeniable:



Romans 7:7

But I can hear you say, 'If the law code was as bad as all that, it's no better than sin itself.' That's certainly not true. The law code had a perfectly legitimate function. Without its clear guidelines for right and wrong, moral behavior would be mostly guesswork.

So ask yourself the question:

What is the Source of Our Value Universal Value Systems?



Could We Be The Source of Morality?

If we accept the truth that there are moral absolutes, we've then got to decide where these absolutes come from. Even when some atheists are cornered into the reality of moral absolutes, most will still argue that something or someone other than an absolute law giver could be the source of absolute moral law, but is this

possible?

All of us have had experiences where we have felt the weight of a guilty conscience. You know, we've all done something that we shouldn't have done, and then felt bad about it afterward. Where does that guilty conscience come from? Do we feel that way because we are simply reacting to the forces and beliefs of our culture? Is our culture the source of our morality? Are people the source of Moral absolutes?



The Change Over Time

If culture is the source of moral absolutes, then it seems fair to recognize that our values will change over time. After all, culture changes over time, and if culture is the source of morality we should recognize that our morality will also change over time. Now many people have argued that this is the case, maintaining that we behave quite differently today than we did even 50 years ago. But while this may be true, the reality of changing behavior does NOT mean that moral absolutes have changed. We may behave differently, but is it any more acceptable to “kill whoever we want” or to “torture innocent children” or to “take the spouse of another” today than it was a hundred years ago? Of course not, even if our behavior has changed over the years, what we “ought to do” is still the same.

But where did the moral code come from if it didn't come from God? Did we just learn it from another human? Many have argued that we learn how to behave from our parents. In essence, you learn what is right and wrong from your mom, and she learned it from her mom and so forth and so forth back into time, each generation teaching the generation that follows.



The Neanderthal Man Mythology

If this is the case, then we would have to go back in time to the first set of parents to find the source of morality! And if you're an atheist, this first set of primitive parents were part of the Neanderthal world of primitive humanity. They would like us to believe that in this simple loving primitive society, the first moral absolutes evolved. People with this belief argue that morals evolve through natural selection. Those cultures that abide by self sustaining moral codes that protect individual rights survive, while immoral societies that treat each other poorly fail to thrive and eventually vanish. But is this really possible? This approach to moral evolution requires that societies accept moral absolutes to survive, but what happens before large people groups emerge? What happens at smaller levels prior to the amassing of societies? Can moral absolutes evolve at the level of the individual?

Let's imagine a scenario. Neanderthal man (let's name him “GRRR” for sake of argument) is hanging out at the cave with his family. Across the mountain, he observes another Neanderthal man (let's call him “UGHH”) hanging out with his family. GRRR is hungry and has had no luck hunting this week. UGHH on the other hand has fresh kill in his cave and is toasting a big one along with the rest of his family. They are fat and happy. GRRR's a little bit ticked. His family is grumpy. They're hungry and they are about to starve to death. GRRR does have a big stick, and he is a lot larger than UGHH. He's got a choice. Stay here with the family and starve to death, or go on over to UGHH's place and steal his grub. Tough decision. If he chooses based on what is best for his family, the choice is easy: get on over there and beat the tar out of UGHH, steal all his food and return to the cave. Hey, why stop

there? If survival is the determining factor, why not kill your competitor, steal his wife and eat his children?

Moral evolutionists want us to believe that early man will make proper ethical decisions even though they clearly don't benefit him personally. Why would that ever happen?



Sacrifice and Service

People have not really changed that much over time. We are still happy to serve ourselves and seek our own personal pleasure. And primitive people who supposedly existed prior to the evolution of morals would be even more inclined to serve their own needs, and if this was the case, no society would ever evolve beyond the nuclear family. If absolute moral standards were not inherent to our nature and given to us by a moral law giver, we could never have progressed beyond the nuclear family. Moral standards that call us to sacrifice our own selfish desires for the betterment of others are NOT inherent to our nature and often call us to have LESS than we would like. They do not come from us because we don't have the natural capacity to create them. They are not in our nature. But we already know that. Even those of us who deny the presence of God are still quietly disturbed by the reality of an absolute moral code:



Romans 2:14-16

Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.



The Voice Stress Analyzer

I first recognized this truth many years ago when I became licensed as a Voice Stress Analysis Technician. This simple device, used in law enforcement circles, purports to be able to measure the fluctuations of FM waves in the human voice. These typically bell shaped waves tend to flatten when we get nervous and tell a lie. Our instructor told us that people get nervous when they lie because they are either (1) afraid that they will be punished for something they have done, or (2) are afraid of being socially outcast as a result of something they have done. In essence, he told us that people get nervous when they lie because they are afraid of the social consequences. But the machine itself seemed to contradict his statement.

As one part of the examination, we ask the interviewee to intentionally lie so that we can measure a flattened FM wave. We give the interviewee an intentionally false answer that is to give us in response to a "control question". We might ask, "is your name Bugs Bunny?" and ask him to intentionally lie and answer, "Yes". When he does this, we observe that the FM waves of his voice flatten. But according to the reasons first given by the instructor, this shouldn't happen, right? After all, we are asking the interviewee to respond with a lie. We are giving him permission. He will not (1) be punished or (2) become a social outcast if he simply gives us the lie we are looking for. So why do his voice waves flatten when he says this harmless lie?

The answer is found in Romans 2:14-16. No matter what he does, the interviewee knows that

lying is wrong. It is against the nature of God and that nature has been grafted into the soul of the interviewee. He knows right from wrong not because it comes as the result of cultural consequence, but because it comes from a Holy God who he is unable to deny. The Voice Stress Analyzer actually proves the existence of God.

So ask yourself the question:

Why Don't We Want to Admit That There is a Divine Prescriber or Law Giver?



We Don't Want to Admit It

There is something at work in our hearts that prevents many of us from opening our eyes and seeing what is right in front of our faces. As much as we might want to deny the presence of the Moral Law Giver, we really don't have anywhere to hide, and if we are honest with ourselves we will have to admit the undeniable:



Romans 1:18-20

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature - have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Most of us who continue to deny God are motivated by our own desire to be in control; our own desire to shape our destiny; our own desire to be a God unto ourselves. But underneath all that we are really very afraid that there may just be a Moral Law Giver Waiting at the end of this life, and we may have to account for our rebellion. Christians don't have to fear that day or the reality that awaits all of us. The morality of the world is fleeting, but the absolute truth of God lasts forever and should guide our lives and give us the peace we need to face the unknown:



John 14:26-27

But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.